

The Life of The Last Prophet



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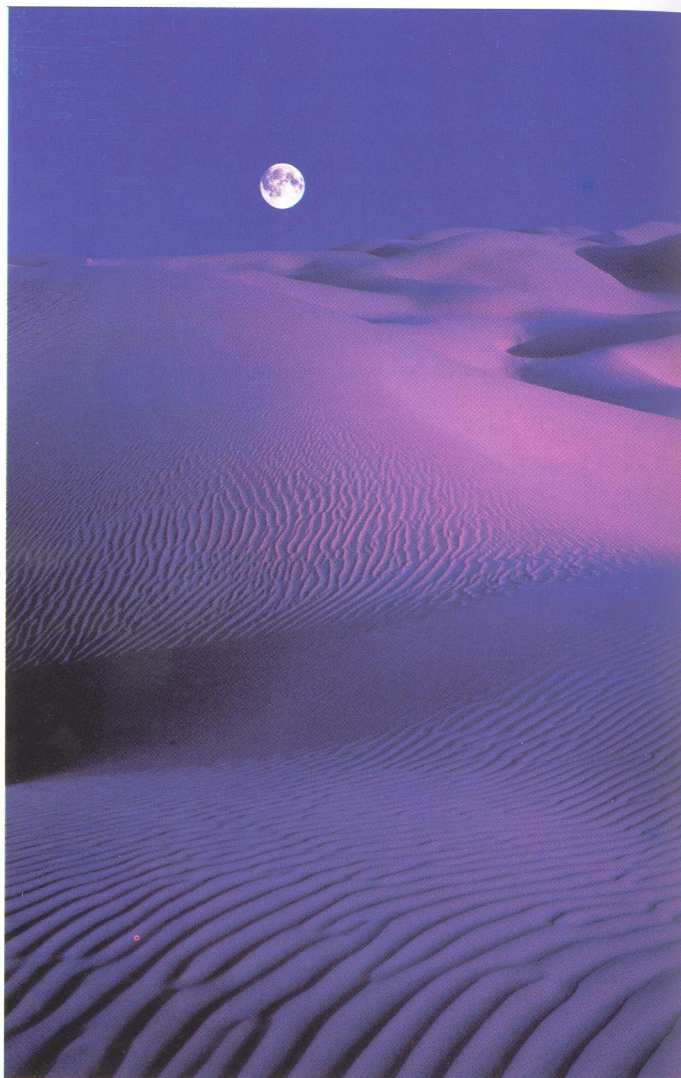
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CONTENTS

Introduction	vii
The Call to Prayer	xi
Early Life	1
Prophethood	7
Migration	21
Conquest of Makkah	33
Sayings of the Prophet ﷺ	39
Notes	43
Chronology	49
Du'ā	51



Introduction

‘WE HAVE SENT YOU (O MUHAMMAD)
ONLY AS A MERCY FOR ALL THE WORLDS.’

QUR’AN: THE PROPHETS (21):107

THE BIRTH of the Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings be upon him, and the dawn of his prophethood was not the birth of a Prophet alone, nor was it the rise of a new nation, nor yet the beginning of a new era. It was the genesis of a new world which was destined to last till the end of time when all shall be returned to their Lord and Master. The influence of Muhammad’s prophethood is visible in everything that the world now contains, the beliefs and patterns of thought, culture and civilization, morals and modes of living, knowledge and learning. In short, all spheres of human endeavour.¹

Strange indeed, therefore, that so many people on the face of the earth today have little or no knowledge of the life and mission of this last great Prophet of God

and his historical impact on the world we live in. It is for this reason that it was decided in all humility to try and compile a brief account of the major highlights of his biography for the general public.

Endless are the words which have been spoken to describe his noble life and personality, but the aim of this presentation is to keep the story as authentic and simple as possible. It is intended as an introduction for those perhaps approaching the subject of the Prophet for the first time. I believe no one can fail to be moved or inspired by the magnificence of his radiant character: even Muhammad's greatest enemies had to admit that no fault could be found in his behaviour or integrity. In addition, those Western scholars and historical figures who over the centuries were brave enough to gaze with an honest heart at the miracle of Muhammad's life and achievements, have testified to this. Some of their observations are remarkable. For example, George Bernard Shaw said:

*"I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving the problems in a way that would bring the much needed peace and happiness. Europe is beginning to be enamoured of the creed of Muhammad. In the next century it may go further in recognizing the utility of that creed in solving its problems."*²

Lamartine in his lengthy tribute to the Prophet wrote:

*"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could claim to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad?"*³

Perhaps most telling of all, Gandhi wrote the following about the Prophet of Islam:

*"I become more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers and his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle."*⁴

This very concise account of 'The Life of the Last Prophet' can in no way take the place of those precious volumes – the product of many years of devoted research – which a great constellation of scholars and historians, such as Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham, have contributed to the understanding and study of the subject; nor does it attempt to. My only hope is simply that it will be able to kindle a spark of light and understanding and inspire the seeker of truth to proceed further along the Way of Guidance that leads to God and earns His good pleasure and eternal mercy.

I seek forgiveness from Allah the Most High for any mistake or error made in the execution of this task,

beseeking Him for His pardon; praying for the guidance of those who may hear it and choose, by the will of God, to follow the noble Messenger.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds and may He send His choicest salutations and peace on the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, and upon his Family and Companions together, *Amin*.

YUSUF ISLAM 1416H/1995CE

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﴿ Allāhu ﴾
 akbar! Allāhu akbar!
 Allāhu akbar! Allāhu akbar!
 Ashhadu an lā ilāha illa Allāh. Ashhadu
 an lā ilāha illa Allāh. Ashhadu anna
 Muḥammadan Rasūlu Allāh. Ashhadu anna
 Muḥammadan Rasūlu Allāh. Hayya 'ala al-ṣalāh.
 Hayya 'ala al-ṣalāh. Hayya 'ala al-falāḥ. Hayya 'ala al-
 falāḥ. Allāhu akbar! Allāhu akbar! Lā ilāha illa Allāh.
 Allah is Most Great! Allah is Most Great! Allah is Most
 Great! Allah is Most Great! I bear witness that there is
 no god but Allah. I bear witness that there is no god
 but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the
 messenger of Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad
 is the messenger of Allah. Come to prayer.
 Come to prayer. Come to success. Come to
 success. Allah is Most Great! Allah is
 Most Great! There is no god but
 ﴿ Allah. ﴾¹